



UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE
FOUNDATION OF CONNECTICUT

Testimony Regarding

**Senate Bill 808: An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Dispute Resolution Process
for Surprise Bills and Bills for Emergency Services
Submitted by Lynne Ide, Director of Program & Policy
Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut
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Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut (UHCF) is an independent, nonprofit foundation working to shape our state's health care system to provide quality, affordable care and promote good health for all state residents.

We support Senate Bill 808 in its effort to strengthen consumer protections in regards to surprise billing, particularly around the use of an out-of-network provider when a consumer-patient is unaware of the provider's status.

This measure, though, is a small piece of a much larger, systemic problems in health care in Connecticut. The state faces numerous challenges as it strives to address the need for access to high-quality, affordable health care that improves health for all state residents.

You are hearing about two bills (Senate Bills 807 and 808) that are part of a larger package of proposed legislation that is attempting to address many of the current challenges—along with several other bills that are also working in this vein. While a move in the right direction, our concern is that this and other proposals would be more effective if incorporated into an omnibus bill. We believe the best course is to make sure legislation helps us achieve long-term, sustainable solutions.

I urge you to watch Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut's short video testimony and check out our complete written testimony and supporting resources on the web at: bit.ly/uahcf-legislative

We can learn much from other states, such as Massachusetts, Vermont, Oregon and Washington—all of which have an "authority" of some sort that brings together health care planning and policymaking to best serve the health care interests of each state. These states are trying to look at the whole picture. We do not have a coordinated, cohesive approach in Connecticut and it is to the detriment of the families, businesses, communities and taxpayers of this state.

What we really need is an omnibus bill that incorporates components of Senate Bills 810 through 815, as well as House Bill 6938 and Senate Bill 916--and possibly more ideas, which could include concepts from Senate Bills 807 and 808. We ask legislative leaders to work to craft a bill across committees with input from stakeholders including consumers, providers and payers. We believe that such a bill can build on current positive work being done in Connecticut and help realize visionary, strategic and sustainable solutions to our shared health care challenges.